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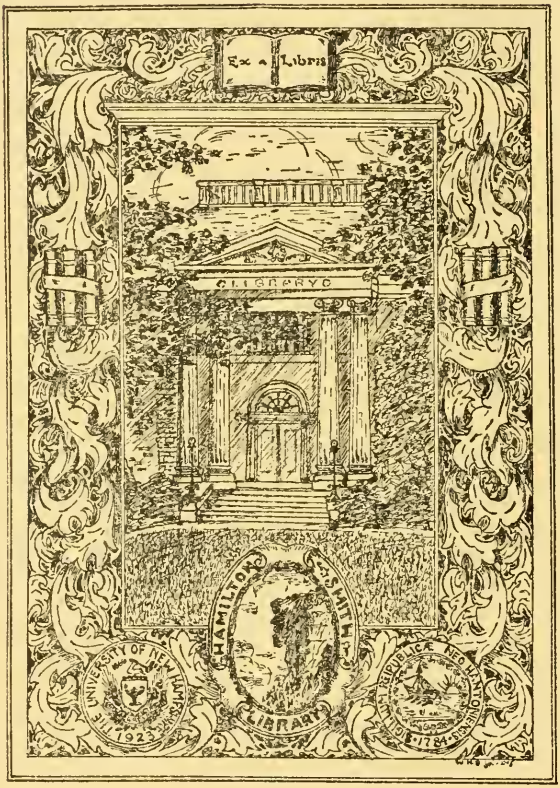

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NEW HAMPSHIRE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
DURHAM, N. H.

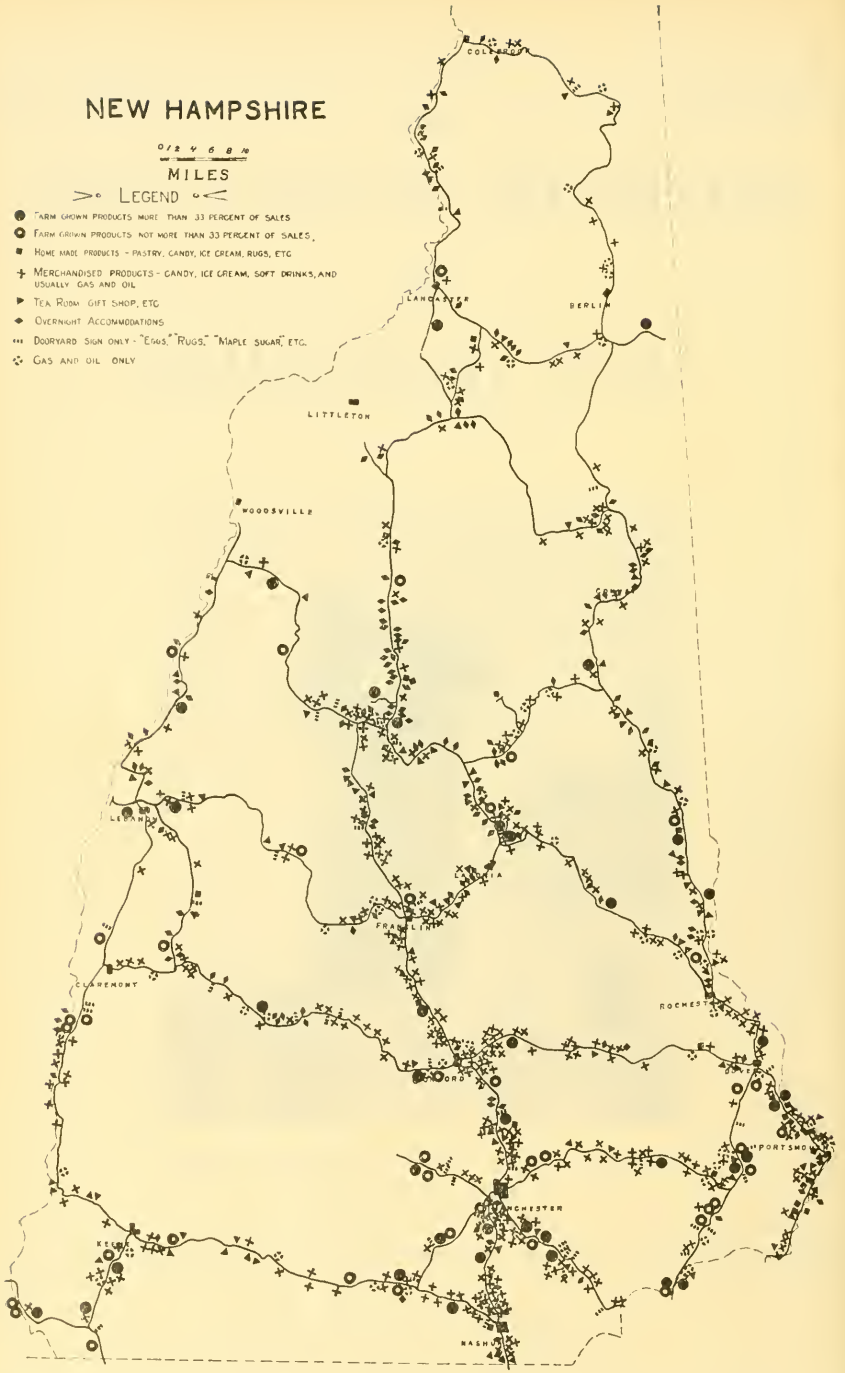
BULLETIN 249 DECEMBER, 1929

ROADSIDE MARKETING *in* NEW HAMPSHIRE

By M. GALE EASTMAN

Sometimes a bear serves as both advertisement and customer.

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DURHAM, N. H.



Map showing the location of nearly 800 places selling at the roadside. Only the roads canvassed in this survey are shown, about 1000 miles in all. No account was taken of tea rooms, gas stands, etc., in the cities and villages, but only such places as were found on farms or in localities where farming might be done.

ROADSIDE MARKETING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

By M. Gale Eastman

The selling of farm products from the field or dooryard is not a new undertaking. At least one roadside market selling mostly farm products has been operated in New Hampshire since 1850; and even since the present owner began selling gas and oil, the greatest change in business has resulted from the opportunity to sell increasing amounts of farm products to a larger group more widely scattered. The bulk of the State's roadside stand development, however, has been rather recent as indicated in Figure 1. Some 78 percent of the 103 places for which such data were obtained had been started in the previous six years.

Many New Hampshire farms have handicaps such as hilly topography, rocky and shallow soils, a short growing season, and the resulting curtailment in variety of farm products. Any enterprise that adds another, or a better, source of income is welcome, and may for some families be the determining factor in balancing the advantages between country and city life. It was largely with the idea of gaining

In some cases at least, children become of economic value in tending a roadside market. It is good training, too, if properly initiated and not overdone. The ones surveyed showed no signs of being abused.

information as to the size of business possible at the roadside market that this study was undertaken. Does the wayside stand serve merely as a supplement to the waning success of the poorly favored farm? Or can a roadside market absorb the mental and physical ability of the personnel on even the best farms and become the major objective of its activity?

EXTENT OF THE SURVEY

Through the cooperation of the county agents an attempt was made in the summer of 1927 to locate all the farms in the state which were selling any appreciable amount of produce at the door. From two to six of these were immediately found in each county, some thirty-five places in all. This group was visited and asked to keep a few simple records.

The first conception of the study was to confine it entirely to such people as were attempting to sell agricultural products. The paucity of such undertakings in the state, coupled with the inexperience and lack of volume often incident to a new undertaking, led to the early conclusion that an adequate study could hardly terminate with these few. There seemed to be quite as many rural people interested in merchandising soft drinks and gasoline as in marketing products from their own gardens. In fact, judging from numbers found on the highways as indicated in Figure 2, this latter undertaking would seem the more popular in the ratio of about five to one. So the attempt was

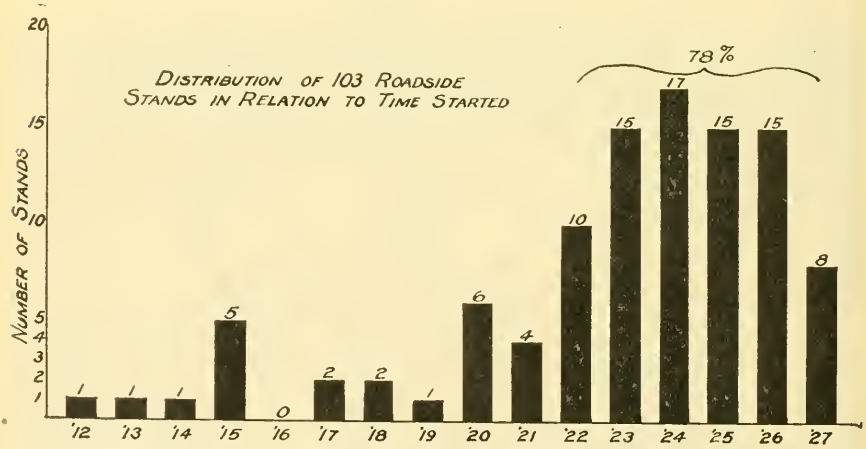


Fig. 1. Of the 103 businesses for which detailed information was obtained in this survey, 78 per cent had been organized since 1921

made to learn something about the status of several kinds of roadside establishments. The only limiting factor imposed has been that they must be on farms, or in localities with such a semblance of farm conditions that they might be similarly operated by farmers. We have carefully avoided including any business which is near, or otherwise over-dependent on, a city or village environment.

On about 1,000 miles of the main highways were found 791 selling

locations of all kinds and descriptions from those indicated by single-word signs tacked up on a tree in the door-yard to the most elaborate individual organizations comprising refreshment stands, gas stands, dining-rooms and overnight accommodations. A variety of things is sold ranging from gifts to goose eggs and from aspirin tablets to old-fashioned furniture. The usual run of farm products, home cooking, homemade rugs, and such merchandise as the carbonated beverages, ice cream, candy, tobacco products, frankfurters, gasoline, motor oil, etc., predominate. Some attempt was made to classify the stands, and the results are shown in Figure 2. There is such intermingling and overlapping of enterprises by chance or design that any grouping must suffer inconsistencies. Different symbols on the map on page 2 depict something of the distribution of these same classes geographically. The striking thing is the predominance of the merchandising type selling purchased products. Doubtless this can be accounted for by the ease of organization and development rather than by excessive remuneration.

From the map a concentration of stands in general through the southern part of the state and along the more heavily travelled roads may be observed. The number of automobiles passing daily is one of the most important factors in increasing sales.* Consequently the Daniel Webster highway from the Massachusetts state line to Concord with its daily traffic of from 4,000 to 6,000 automobiles and trucks is a decidedly more attractive location than the Keene to Nashua road with only 1,000 to 1,600 cars passing daily.** Roads through the National Forest in the north end of the state are not available as sites for roadside stands.

The presence of more markets for farm products in the southern part of the state is due to an additional advantage in growing a better variety of produce throughout a longer growing season than in the north, and to the proximity of more nearby cities to supply local trade as well as to the general advantage of more travel on the roads. The 77 locations selling homegrown produce are shown separately on a map, page 15. There is also evident from the more inclusive map on page 2 an actual and proportionally larger number of overnight accommodations in the mountainous part of the state. This is due perhaps to less competition in price from the local hotels as well as to the ab-

*Per cent determination of total sales by the average number of cars passing daily, distance to nearest village, distance to nearest stand of similar kind, hours open per day, and weeks open per year. (101 Locations)

Factors	*Per cent*
Average number of cars and trucks passing daily	.33
Distance to nearest village	.01
Distance to nearest stand of similar kind	.02
Hours open per day	—.01
Weeks open per year	—.02
Total	.33

R 1.23456 = .569

**Report of a survey of transportation on the State Highways of New Hampshire 1927, by the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads and the New Hampshire State Highway Department, Page 78.

TABLE I.—*Prices of lodging and meals at roadside stands*

	Number of places	Average price	Range
Price of lodging	27	$1.19	$1.00 to $2.50
Price of meals: Breakfast	20	0.68	0.40 to 2.00
Dinner	11	1.09	0.50 to 2.00
Supper	19	0.75	0.50 to 2.00

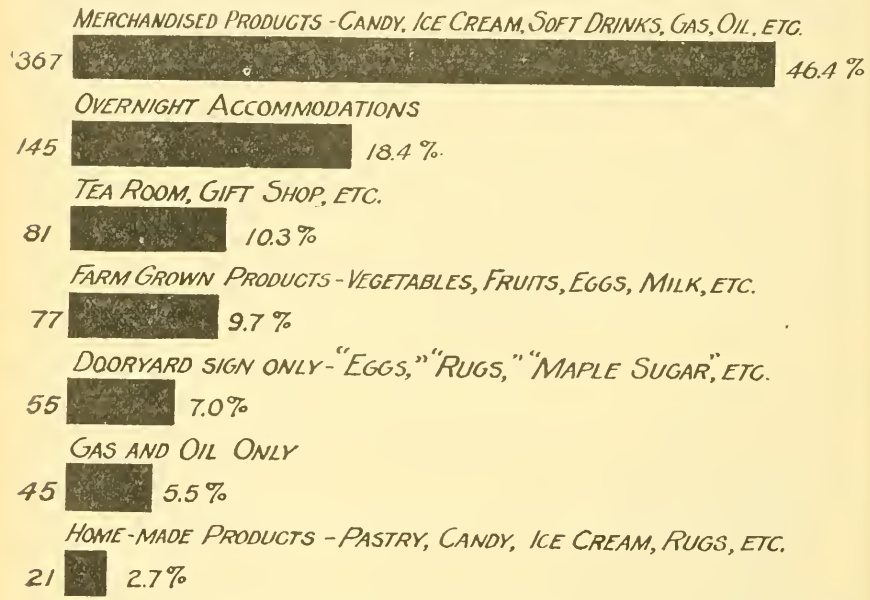


Fig. 2. Classification of stands in New Hampshire by leading enterprises. (791 stands on 1000 miles of road.)

sence of year-around city facilities so much more numerous farther south. The average price of lodging at country places was $1.19 per person with a range of from one dollar to two-fifty as shown in Table 1. There was only one place, however, that charged the higher figure, and that was for double beds in rooms that afforded the privilege of being occupied by two people at the same price. There is much variation in the hospitality and appearance of the different rooming places. Everything is found from the small but numerous "porches", to large spacious rooms in old-fashioned colonial dwellings; from courtesy and solicitation to indifference; and from the clean to the otherwise. Particularly undesirable places are in the minority. For the transient, it is a bit difficult to make appraisals from the outside, but every proprietor of the more desirable homes was found courteous and willing to offer an opportunity for inspection.

TABLE II.—*Average sales at each stand*
(207 stands for which total estimated sales were obtained)

Most obvious enterprise	Number of stands	Average sales
Farm-raised products, vegetables, fruit, milk, eggs, etc.	50	$3144
Home-made products, pastry, candy, ice cream, rugs, etc.	13	1350
Merchandised products, candy, ice cream, soft drinks, gas, oil, etc.	88	1554
Tea room, gift shop, etc.	20	2367
Overnight accommodations	21	957
Gas and oil only	3	833
Dooryard sign only, "Eggs," "Rugs," "Maple sugar," etc.	12	596
Total number of stands and average sales for all stands	207	$1878

GENERAL RESUME' OF FIGURES

Estimates for total sales per stand for the summer, or year, of 1926, more or less compared for accuracy's sake with current conditions during the survey period in 1927 were obtained at 207 places of business. The average sales were $1878. An attempt was made to classify these places according to the most obvious kind of business in which each was interested and the results are shown in Table II.

There was no conscious attempt in the interviews to pick out the stands for any one reason, such as amount of business done, or size of house, except that no place selling appreciable quantities of farm produce was purposely omitted. All farm products markets suggested by the county agents as well as others discovered and interviewed during the summer travels are included in this group. There were 55 in all, but only 50 at which such products constituted a major enterprise. The five selling relatively less important amounts were classified under other headings. For the whole state there were only 77 locations recorded in Figure 2 that sold any home-grown products at all and some of those were of insignificant size and were not interviewed. On the other hand there are represented in the 88 merchandising stands less than one-fourth of those in the state. The significance then of Table II is in showing the average sales for all stands surveyed and the apparent predominance in size of business for the first group, raising farm products, as expressed in average sales of $3144. The next highest group is the one called "Tea room, gift shop" with an average of $2367, while the merchandising group comprising 88 locations is third with average sales of $1554. There are also many lots of corn and green beans and tomatoes sold beside the road that escape special notice because of their very temporary nature, and these sell insignificant amounts, in most cases from one or two dollars worth to ten or twenty perhaps.

Out of the 207 locations just discussed, detailed estimates, checked with all available records, were obtained from 103 proprietors in regard to each kind of produce or merchandise handled. This was done to get more accurate data in regard to total sales, as well as other information of interest. This accounts for the two groups of data, one of 103 and one of 207 records, in Table III. Here the records have been sorted into classes according to the total amount of sales at each stand. It should be noted that the smaller group of detailed estimates has a tendency to include the larger businesses and to drop out more of the smaller ones. This results quite generally from a conscious effort all the time to focus attention on the places selling farm products, and this type tends to be larger than the others. For example, every

TABLE III.—*Distribution of sizes of stands as measured by total sales*

103 WITH DETAILED ESTIMATES OF BUSINESS				INCLUDING 104 WITH ESTIMATES OF SALES ONLY			
	Stands		Average sales	Stands		Total sales	Average sales
Sales	No.	Per cent		No.	Per cent		
Over $10,000.....	5	4.9	$12,721	5	2.41	$63,606	$12,721
$5001 to $10,000...	7	6.8	7,247	10	4.83	63,777	6,378
4001 to 5,000...	6	5.8	4,444	7	3.38	31,664	4,523
3001 to 4,000...	12	11.6	3,380	12	5.80	40,565	3,380
2001 to 3,000...	17	16.5	2,447	22	10.63	55,132	2,506
1501 to 2,000...	10	9.7	1,773	18	8.70	32,980	1,832
1001 to 1,500...	17	16.5	1,226	33	15.94	43,399	1,315
501 to 1,000...	21	20.4	720	54	26.09	41,971	777
Not over $500.....	8	7.8	332	46	22.22	15,561	338
Total or Average.	103	100.0	$2,714	207	100.00	$388,655	$1,878

proprietor in the first group is definitely interested in raising and selling farm products, and the man who sells the least of the five happens to be handling $2,000 worth. Also, while there were 46 stands out of 207 which had sales not exceeding $500 and which averaged only $338, there are only 8 of this range in the 103 group and their sales averaged $332. Consequently the average total sales at each stand for the group of 103 is $2,714, in contrast to $1878 for the 207.

There are large numbers of very small merchandising stands; possibly so many that it is difficult for anyone to do a large business in this class of goods. On the other hand it does not seem at all impossible to develop a roadside market for farm products of appreciable proportions. Out of the 103 proprietors, 18, or 17.4 per cent, showed sales over $4,000 and practically 5 per cent made over $10,000 worth of sales with an average of $12,721 each. Surely if a man could sell at the door even $4,000 worth of farm products largely the result of

his own family's efforts he would probably be marketing his labor at a fair price and at least have something worth-while to do. Records of 24 general farmers from all counties of the state who sent in their account books to be summarized by the University Extension Service for the season of 1926 showed average total gross receipts at each farm of only $3996,* and these are necessarily selected farms, undoubtedly much better than the average. We shall go on to consider in more detail this group comprising 103 locations.

Table IV shows a summary of the stands most carefully studied. The total sales for this group were something over a quarter of a million dollars, or $279,515. The total sales of farm products either raised or purchased were $67,659. It is perhaps safe to assume that nearly a million dollars' worth of business is done at the roadside stands

TABLE IV.—*Total sales and sales at each stand for selected groups of commodities*
(103 locations)

	Total sales	Average Sales				
		All stands		Stands Selling		
		Amount	Per cent of sales	Number	Amount	Per cent of sales
Farm products produced on place	$53,957	$524	19.3	55	$981	31.1
Farm products purchased	13,702	133	4.9	18	761	17.5
Home prepared food, etc.	49,752	483	17.8	69	721	27.2
Purchased food, candy, etc.	57,040	554	20.4	69	827	24.1
Gasoline and oil	83,332	809	29.8	51	1,634	41.1
Overnight accommodations	8,347	81	3.0	32	261	9.4
All other, miscellaneous	13,515	130	4.8	10	1,352	24.7*
Totals	$279,515	$2,714	100.0	..	....	....

*A few large amounts from such items as leasing tennis courts and selling old-fashioned furniture, groceries, and weaving and sewing which were not classified elsewhere make this group appear abnormally large.

in the rural communities of this state mostly by farm people, although not as much as ten per cent of that amount would be represented by farm products.

The mere merchandising of farm products purchased in the city or from others at a distance, and resold from a stand out of doors—a practice which has called forth considerable protest from both producers and consumers in other states—is most conspicuous by its absence at rural farm markets in New Hampshire. Perhaps the deception would be more obvious in this state than farther south where a longer growing season favors a much greater variety in farm production; possibly merchandising under New Hampshire conditions is found to entail less risk when confined to less perishable wares like soft drinks,

*Unpublished data on file in office of Station Economist.

candies, cigarettes, and what not; doubtless there is less temptation here than in communities where larger and more numerous cities are distributed; and, finally, the traffic on our main highways may provide a less attractive vantage ground than more heavily travelled roads in other states for the employment of city funds and talent in such an undertaking. Table IV shows that less than 5 per cent of the average sales per stand were purchased farm products, and as a matter of fact these few purchases were made locally, practically without exception.

It is of interest to note that as classified here, farm products, including the 4.9 per cent purchased for resale as well as the 19.3 per cent raised, represent 24.2 per cent of the total sales. They are exceeded only by gasoline and oil which represent 29.8 per cent. The big groups, representing roughly between 18 and 30 per cent of total sales, are gasoline and oil, farm products, merchandised commodities like candy, ice cream, and tobacco, and home prepared food. Overnight accommodations and miscellaneous represent only 3 and 4.8 per cent respectively of total sales. There is obviously a difference between buying and selling gasoline on a gross margin of 5 to 15 percent and selling farm products which one has raised largely with his own labor and with little direct cash outlay. The proprietor of a merchandising place cannot get anything more out of a product than the gross margin—the difference between what he pays for it and the price for which he sells it; and he too has his fixed costs of rent, depreciation, taxes, insurance and repairs. The farmer may have to pay out cash for feed and fertilizer, but the main difference is one of labor and management involved. The cost of production for these crops and animal products is beyond the scope of this study, and we can only suggest that in so far as the difference in margin between selling farm products and merchandising others is one of hours of work the roadside stand should be a desirable way to market some farm labor. We talk about "the farmer's thirty cent dollar," meaning that out of every dollar paid by the consumer the farmer gets less than one third for producing the product. Surely if he sells at the roadside he is taking the place of some middlemen and may hope to get a part of their pay. For example, the cost of marketing apples at 12 representative stands in Michigan, as compared to selling them through the regular channels, indicated that the grower's portion by the latter method, was only 19.4 cents out of the consumers' dollar while at the roadside he got sixty cents besides being paid fifteen cents for his extra labor.* Something of the gross margins on merchandise handled at the roadside are shown in Table V. This table is based on a few averages. It does not attempt to emphasize sufficiently the wastes and losses incident to the handling of such materials.

In Table VI the records were sorted by the proportion of sales represented by farm grown products. The distribution of sales among the different classes and something of the relation of family receipts from other sources to that from the roadside marketing business is included. The distribution of the classes of products sold would appear to be

*Agricultural Experiment Station, East Lansing, Michigan. Special Bulletin No. 185, Roadside Marketing in Michigan.

mostly a matter of chance. The forty-eight stands that sold no home-grown farm produce show total sales averaging $2209 each. This is low compared to the average for the whole 103 and means that the 55 selling some farm products must average over $3000 each. A significant figure is that denoting the proportion of total family receipts which is represented by the total sales at the stand. This averages 67.9 per cent for the 98 places where "other income" could be secured by the enumerator. There were 19 of these which obtained their total family receipts from roadside market sales, averaging $3,169.

In order to get some idea of the probabilities in the different classes of sales as found in the group surveyed, five records were selected from the whole 103 that showed the largest sales in each class. The aver-

TABLE V.—*Average gross margins at stands as estimated or recorded by proprietors*

Commodity	Number stands	Unit and average margin	Per cent
Gasoline	46	2.45¢ gallon	12.8
Ice Cream	..	.....	20.0*
Tobacco	17	2.85¢ can or pkt.	26.3
Cigars	17	2.47¢ each	30.4
Cigarettes	26	3.65¢ pkt.	33.8
Candy	16	1.67¢ 5c piece	50.0
Frankfurters	16	4.20¢ each with roll	82.4
Motor Oil	38	12.01¢ quart	92.0
Soft Drinks	41	3.76¢ bottle	110.0**

*Ice cream margins were practically impossible to get from the present experience of roadside stand operators. A few had raised the question of profits in their own minds and a very few had attempted to get some check on the difference between costs and sales. One proprietor checking up carefully found a five gallon can netted him sixty-eight cents after paying for cones; another got a gross margin of thirty-five cents on a three gallon can and iced it for himself; still another got thirty cents on a three gallon lot which was iced by the company; and finally one who kept very accurate records on all his business had a margin of nine dollars for the season after paying $247.30 for ice cream, $18 for salt, and $50 for ice. These represent margins of from three to ten per cent, but doubtless are not typical for the group as a whole. Some assumed they were making reasonable profits, while several had discontinued handling ice cream altogether; the majority were selling it regardless of profits and without question as a matter of service. In the few cases where a gross margin figure has been used in this study 20 per cent is assumed to be the best approximation possible. A survey of dealer profits for 58 drug stores merchandising ice cream since made by Boston University [Boston University, Bureau of Business Research, Dealer Profits on Ice Cream, Jan. 28, 1929] showed an average gross profit of 24.7 per cent on sales. This was figured on a cost of $1.30 per gallon. The average cost to 32 roadside stands was $1.38. Making and adjustment for this difference their gross margin on this cost would be 25 per cent, assuming that they sold at about the same price. But doubtless the methods of handling and storing at roadside stands in regard to temperature and dipping practices would be conducive to more shrinkage rather than less.

**Soft drinks usually involve considerable expense for icing and often some loss of empty bottles.

TABLE VI.—*Stands sorted by per cent of sales represented by farm produce raised on the place*

Farm products raised	Number of stands	AVERAGE PROPORTIONS OF SALES FROM DIFFERENT CLASSES							OTHER AVERAGES		
		Farm products raised	Farm products purchased	Farm prepared food	Purchased food, candy, etc.	Gasoline and oil	Overnight accommodations	Miscellaneous	Total sales from stand	Other family receipts	Per cent total receipts from stand
Per Cent		Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent			
None.....	48	0.0	0.2	30.0	30.0	27.8	5.1	6.9	$2209	(47) $1151	66.1
Less than 20%.	22	11.9	14.8	7.7	20.8	37.8	2.9	4.1	3477	(19) 1402	73.1
20 to 39+%...	9	26.8	1.7	17.1	11.6	36.7	1.0	5.1	5687	864	86.8
40 to 59+%...	6	51.2	0.2	13.4	9.7	24.2	0.0	1.3	3788	(5) 1756	71.2
60 to 79+%...	5	74.5	6.1	2.0	9.6	5.6	2.2	0.0	2261	1218	65.0
80 to 100%....	13	94.2	4.8	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	904	2024	30.9
Total and averages.....	103	19.3	4.9	17.8	20.4	29.8	3.0	4.8	$2714	(98) $1323*	67.9*

*Only 98 places at which "other receipts" was obtained.

TABLE VII.—*Distribution of business for five stands having largest sales in each of seven different classes*

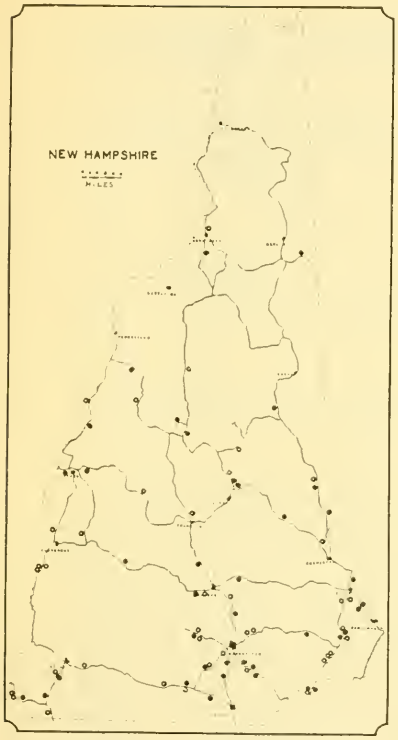
Classes	Farm products raised	Farm products purchased	Home prepared food, etc.	Purchased food, candy, etc.	Gasoline and oil	Overnight accomodations	Other miscellaneous products	Total sales per stand	Other family receipts	Total family receipts	Per cent receipts from stand
Farm products raised on the place, $4,063.....	....	$157	$1,658	$825	$2,156	$100	$520	$9,479	$1,757	$11,236	84.4
Farm products purchased, $2,439.....	$1,778	....	88	333	1,467	64	None	6,169	1,239	7,408	83.3
Home prepared food, etc., $3,731.....	1,033	29	....	613	None	100	360	5,866	939	6,805	86.2
Purchased food, candy, etc., $2,697.....	14	22	431	....	1,213	10	None	4,387	1,594	5,981	73.3
Gasoline and oil, $6,074....	1,591	880	124	1,239	....	None	530	10,438	372	10,810	96.5
Overnight accommodations, $684...	1,193	35	2,293	618	104	....	None	4,927	939	5,866	84.0
Other miscellaneous, $2,560....	743	89	877	948	1,820	16	....	7,053	500	7,553	93.4
Average for 35 stands.....	1,488	522	1,314	1,039	1,833	139	567	6,902	1,049	7,951	....
Per cent of total sales, etc...	21.6	7.6	19.0	15.0	26.6	2.0	8.2	100.0	13.2	100	86.8

ages of each of the seven groups then are given in Table VII. The five largest producers of farm products for the roadside market averaged to sell $4063 worth of these goods. They sold other things, such as $1658 worth of home cooking; $2156 worth of gasoline and oil; $825 worth of merchandised food materials, like candy and ice cream; and less amounts of the other classes, making up total sales per stand of $9479. The largest sales of farm products purchased averaged $2439 for five places. A group of five similarly selected in respect to home prepared food products averaged $3731, and for merchandised food, candy, etc., $2,697. The gasoline and oil group showed the largest sales of any, both in the product by which selected and in total sales, $6074 and $10,438 respectively. But it should be borne in mind that the margin of profit on gasoline is small, without accounting for evaporation and other possible shrinkage. Overnight accommodations, including a few meals for the lodgers as well as room rent, amounted to $684. This group depends on sales of home cooking $2293, farm products mostly raised $1228, merchandised food $618, and gasoline $104, to make up total sales per stand of practically $5000. The selling of old-fashioned furniture, groceries, hand-made baskets, sewing and weaving, auto tires, and similar articles, uncommon to roadside marketing in general but representing an appreciable amount of business in a few individual cases, made it possible to pick out five records with average sales from miscellaneous, so-called, of $2560. Perhaps

The variety at farm produce markets often ranges from vegetables to balsam pillows.

this condition suggests that almost anything may be sold at a roadside stand under opportune conditions.

Some of the averages for the whole group are of possible interest, showing the total sales as $6902, which represents 86.8 per cent of the total receipts for these 35 homes. As would be expected, where a road-



Map showing the location of 77 places where farm produce is sold at the roadside. The solid circles indicate that farm products represent at least 33 per cent of total sales. The rings suggest that farm products are a less important proportion of total sales.

side business gets larger it tends to absorb more of the family's attention and to limit the income from other sources.

THE FARM PRODUCE MARKETS

Table VIII gives considerable detail relating to the 55 stands out of the 103, each of which sold home-grown farm produce. The records are arranged in groups depending on the size of business as measured by total sales. There is evidence in this distribution of more difficulty to be experienced in getting into the larger groups. There happen to be five in the $10,000 class and only four in the less than the $500 class; but there is a tendency for more records to fall in the lower half of the table than the upper, indicating, as would be expected, that it is easier to develop a market selling from $500 to $3000 than one selling from that amount to $10,000 worth or more. In the range from $1 to $5000 there are 47 records while the greater range from $5000 to $10,000 and over comprises only 8. In the percentage distribution, we note that the proportion of the family receipts derived from these sales is high with the larger businesses and tends to decrease rather consistently as the groups decline in total sales. In other words, those families that have sales of $4000 or better from their roadside markets, are disposed to get a small amount of income from other sources. As a matter of fact there were only four families which got their entire receipts from the stand and eight others that got as much as 85 percent. Nine of these twelve were in the upper three groups.

Total sales for this whole group of 55 averaged $3154 for each place. Of this amount 31.1 per cent was made up of farm products raised, 29.7 per cent of gasoline and oil, 15.3 per cent of merchandised food materials, 10.9 per cent of home prepared food, 7.8 per cent of farm products purchased, 3.5 per cent of miscellaneous and only 1.7 per cent of over-night accommodations. Farm products raised and purchased made up, then, 38.9 per cent and with the addition of home cooking represented just about half of total sales, or 49.8 per cent. There seems to

TABLE VIII.—*Markets selling some home-grown products grouped by total sales and showing distribution of sales by classes in each group*

Range of total sales	Number of places	AVERAGE VALUES FOR EACH STAND IN DIFFERENT GROUPS									
		Total sales	Farm products raised	Farm products purchased	Farm prepared food	Purchased food, candy, etc.	Gasoline and oil	Overnight acco'modations	Other miscellaneous	Other family receipts	Total family receipts
		Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Over $10,000	5	12,721	3,914	2,163	1,730	1,048	3,182	164	520	1,564	14,285
$5,001–$10,000	3	7,814	1,655	67	183	970	4,907	....	33	537	8,351
4,001– 5,000	2	4,278	725	238	644	770	....	400	1,500	....	4,278
3,001– 4,000	7	3,357	652	85	250	1,085	1,235	50	....	1,594	4,951
2,001– 3,000	10	2,434	959	108	179	405	678	91	14	1,236	3,670
1,501– 2,000	5	1,830	415	20	310	502	533	10	40	(4)1,478	(4)3,374
1,001– 1,500	9	1,303	627	5	220	255	195	1	....	(6)1,454	(6)2,784
501– 1,000	10	754	453	14	133	41	113	....	....	2,144	2,898
Not over $500	4	403	394	9	....	....	....	....	....	1,645	2,048
Total or average	55	3,154	981	245	344	483	938	53	110	1,482*	4,780*

TABLE VIII.—*(Continued)*

Range of total sales	Number of places	Percentage distribution								
		Total sales	Farm products raised	Farm products purchased	Farm prepared food	Purchased food, candy, etc.	Gasoline and oil	Overnight accommodations	Other miscellaneous	Per cent of family receipts from stand
		Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	
Over $10,000.....	5	100	30.8	17.0	13.6	8.2	25.0	1.3	4.1	89.1
$5,001–$10,000...	3	100	21.2	.9	2.3	12.4	62.8	....	.4	93.6
4,001– 5,000...	2	100	16.9	5.6	15.1	18.0	....	9.3	35.1	100.0
3,001– 4,000...	7	100	19.4	2.5	7.5	32.3	36.8	1.5	....	67.8
2,001– 3,000...	10	100	39.4	4.4	7.4	16.6	27.9	3.7	.6	66.3
1,501– 2,000...	5	100	22.7	1.1	16.9	27.4	29.1	.6	2.2	56.2
1,001– 1,500...	9	100	48.1	.4	16.9	19.5	15.0	.1	....	47.8
501– 1,000...	10	100	60.1	1.9	17.6	5.4	15.0	....	....	26.0
Not over $500...	4	100	97.8	2.2	....	....	....	....	....	19.7
Total or average .	55	100	31.1	7.8	10.9	15.3	29.7	1.7	3.5	69.0*

*Includes only 51 places at which "other income" was obtained.

be close association between the amount of farm products raised for sale and the total sales; in other words, it looks as if these places were rather definitely organized around the production of farm products as an enterprise of leading importance and that other classes of sales were more or less incidental, or "fillers".* The largest sales group has about the same proportion of farm products sold as the average for all, more than twice the proportion of farm products purchased for sale, and more farm prepared food. In the group, then, with average total sales of $12,721, the combination of these three classes of sales, rather intimately associated with farm production and labor, represents 61.4 per cent. This suggests at least that the business does not necessarily grow away from farm production as it increases in size; that there is here a possible outlet for farm products in appreciable amounts; and, perhaps, that some other products in the merchandising line may be sold to advantage even at the large market by virtue of the fact that they would involve little if any additional outlay of energy or overhead investment.

Time Involved

Roadside marketing is easy to start. Some week-end when there are a few strawberries on hand, hardly worth the bother of taking to town, they may be set out on a table in the shade of one of the dooryard trees and sold to passers-by. The novelty and apparent ease of disposing of a few products in this way are likely to mask the irksomeness, restraint, and extra labor and skill involved, when organized as a regular business. In the first place, roadside marketing is a summer business, in its very nature inconsistent with providing a vacation for its proprietor when other people are wont to take theirs. Leisure time is an invitation to many people to travel and spend, and increases the importance of having roadside markets in readiness to attract and serve them. Possibly the more the mercury rises, the more travel to get a breeze or to reach a lake or the country, and the greater the likelihood of stopping for a lunch of fruit and sandwiches—and certainly for ice cream and cold drinks—at the wayside stand. Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of sales through the months of the year for 82 places at which such information was obtained. It will be noted that over half the year's business was done in July and August, and over 85 per cent from June to September inclusive.

Again the apportionment of sales by days of the week hardly conforms with any ideal. There was only one stand in the state that was closed on Sunday. Even places that regularly failed to open every day in the week, were always open on Sunday, as well as some that were only open one day a week, or started out that way in early summer. The average distribution of sales by days is illustrated in Figure 4. The sales for this group of 72 businesses ran about 10 percent for each of five days of the week, nearly doubled that proportion on Saturday, and trebled it on Sunday. About 50 percent of the week's business shows up in Saturday and Sunday sales. Many of the mer-

*Gross Correlations: Total sales per stand and (1) sales of raised produce .757±.039. (2) Sales of gasoline and oil .574±.091. (3) Sales of home cooking, etc. .474±.105. (4) Sales of farm products purchased .176±.132.

chandising stands, particularly those that depend on transient trade almost entirely, make a still larger share of their sales over the week-end. The markets selling home grown products and often catering more largely to local trade, tend to reduce materially the proportion of sales on Sunday and to dispose of more through the middle of the week. The distribution of daily sales for twelve individuals who kept

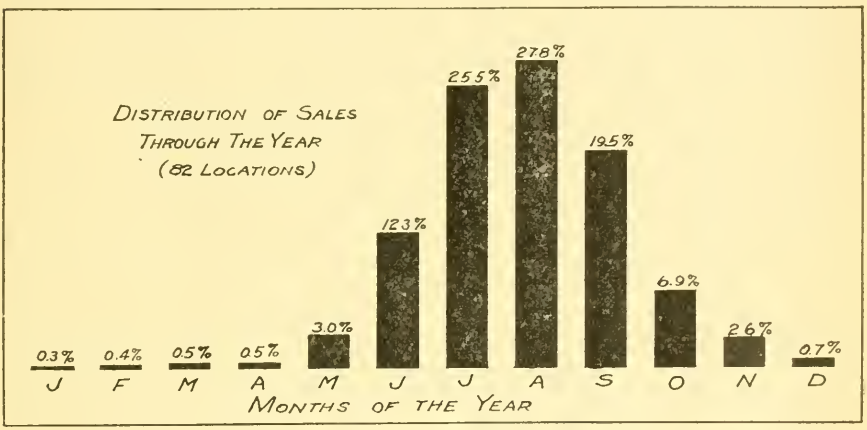


Fig. 3. How sales are distributed by months.

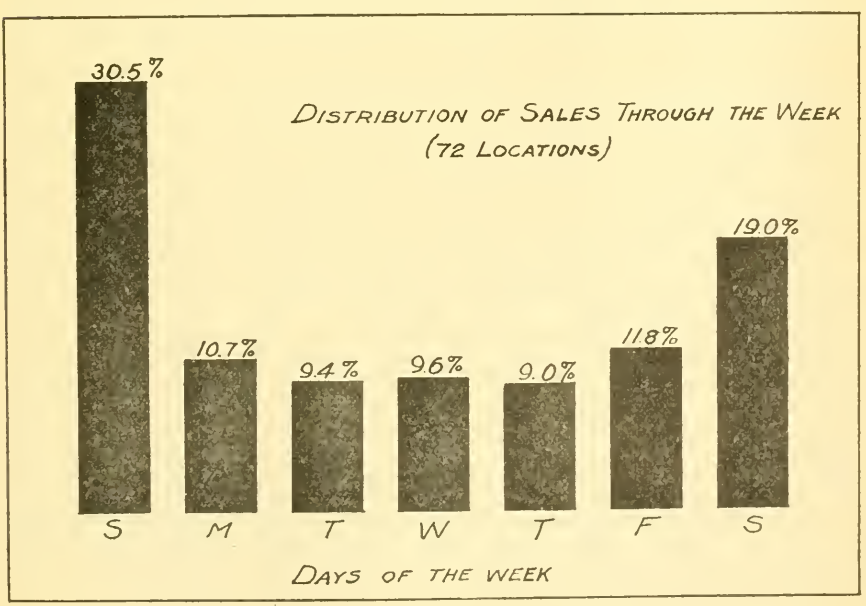


Fig. 4. How sales are distributed by days.

accurate records is given in Table IX. These people in every case are devoting a major part of their energy to building up trade in farm grown produce. There is considerable variety in other respects, nevertheless, from total sales of over $12,000 to less than $300, and from doing business the year around to only three months, and from completing 47 percent of the week's business on Sunday to less than 2 per cent. The average for the twelve is $2,140 total sales, less than 20 per cent on Sunday, over 10 per cent for each of the days through the middle of the week, and a little over 18 per cent for Saturday. The market that caters to local trade has more control over distribution of sales by way of suggestion and advice to patrons as well as by other

TABLE IX.—*Percentage distribution of sales through the week*
(From daily records of 12 stands selling a large proportion of home-grown products)

Number of stand	Weeks open	Total sales	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1	52	$12,361	7.1	15.2	6.9	10.8	15.4	33.9	10.7
2	16	2,475	1.6	11.8	14.7	16.7	13.4	20.4	21.4
3	17	2,386	29.0	16.2	6.8	5.7	14.1	6.4	21.8
4	17	2,300	13.0	9.0	27.5	26.0	8.0	7.0	9.5
5	15	1,865	47.1	8.0	3.7	8.8	3.8	5.8	22.8
6	14	1,111	20.4	8.7	12.6	17.4	15.0	12.5	13.4
7	17	941	24.6	14.4	10.5	11.0	11.8	13.3	14.4
8	20	522	29.9	13.8	7.1	8.3	10.9	8.8	21.2
9	52	521	10.5	14.5	13.0	13.7	8.0	11.8	28.5
10	20	502	15.6	30.5	5.6	14.0	9.1	7.5	17.7
11	13	449	30.1	9.4	11.4	6.7	5.2	16.3	20.9
12	17	253	7.0	10.4	15.4	16.1	15.3	17.3	18.5
Average	22.5	$2,140	19.7	13.5	11.3	12.9	10.8	13.4	18.4

advertising, and is less dependent on daily traffic so much influenced by weather and coincidence with holidays.

Not only does the method of selling we are discussing obtrude on the proprietor's Sundays and holidays, but on his evenings as well. Some figures bearing on this condition are shown in Table X. Nearly 10 per cent of these places interviewed were open all the time day and night. One place selling much home cooking attributed its success quite largely to a midnight dining room and lunch business after its competitors had closed. The average number of hours open per stand for the 103 was 14.4 hours on week days and 15.1 on Sundays and holidays. This is likely to mean lengthening the day mostly at the latter end, for it is often the custom to begin these same long days at nine or ten in the morning as traffic commences to increase.

But a fluctuating business must have its ebb tides as well as its flood. So looking at Table X again we find that while approximately 25 per

TABLE X.—*Weeks of the year and hours of the day that stands are open*

NUMBER OF WEEKS OPEN DURING YEAR			NUMBER OF HOURS OPEN DURING DAY				
				Week days		Holidays and Sundays	
Weeks open	Number of stands	Per cent of stands	Hours open	Number of stands	Per cent of stands	Number of stands	Per cent of stands
7	2	1.9	3	1	1.0	1	1.0
11	2	1.9	6	1	1.0	0	0.0
12	2	1.9	8	4	3.9	2	1.9
13	7	6.8	9	1	1.0	2	1.9
14	4	3.9	10	3	2.9	1	1.0
15	3	2.9	11	7	6.8	5	4.9
16	3	2.9	12	9	8.7	9	8.7
17	7	6.8	13	13	12.6	10	9.7
18	7	6.8	14	21	20.3	19	18.5
19	6	5.8	15	15	14.6	16	15.5
20	6	5.8	16	16	15.5	13	12.6
21	9	8.7	17	1	1.0	9	8.7
23	3	2.9	18	1	1.0	5	4.9
24	4	3.9	20	0	0.0	1	1.0
25	3	2.9	24	10	9.7	10	9.7
26	4	3.9					
27	1	1.0					
29	1	1.0					
30	2	1.9					
34	1	1.0					
40	1	1.0					
52	25	24.4					
Totals	103	100.0		103	100.0	103	100.0

Average number weeks open per stand 27.2, average for 78 stands not open all the time 19.3.

Average number of hours open per day: week days 14.4, Sundays and holidays 15.1.

cent of the stands surveyed were open the year around, the other 78 places only averaged 19.3 weeks or something less than five months. It is likewise apparent from Figure 3 that the twelve months' business does not operate on any high scale of activity during the major part of the year. The roadside business, then, for New Hampshire at least, is a problem in seasonal development contemporary with the crop growing period, long days, and summer traffic. Increasing winter use of the roads for automobiles, closed cars, characteristic good cellar

TABLE XI.—*Months in which stands open and close for the season*

Month	STANDS WHICH OPEN IN EACH MONTH		STANDS WHICH CLOSE IN EACH MONTH	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
January	26*	25.2	0	0
February	0	0	0	0
March	1	1.0	0	0
April	5	4.9	0	0
May	42	40.7	0	0
June	23	22.3	0	0
July	5	4.9	0	0
August	0	0	0	0
September	1	1.0	20	19.4
October	0	0	30	29.1
November	0	0	18	17.5
December	0	0	35*	34.0
Total	103	100.0	103	100.0

*Of this number 25 are open the year around.

storage facilities on farms, and more attention to local trade may increase winter business some, but its potential possibilities as compared to summer are relatively unimportant.

Stands which are not open the year around, mostly start selling in May and June. The largest group closes in October, but there are many which terminate the season's activity in September and November and some in December. Some figures are shown in Table XI.

Labor

One of the fundamental problems of agricultural production is labor. Sometimes there is difficulty in paying the price for labor, or in getting labor that is efficient to help the farmer with his work; often of no less importance is the problem of finding continuous remunerative employment for the members of the farm family—that is, of having the business large enough and made up of enterprises so happily selected that the results of labor expended shall amply reward the laborer for

his efforts and allow him to enjoy a reasonable standard of living. Labor is always a big item in farm economy for the reason that manual effort is the largest single factor which enters into the cost of production of the world's food supply. In Table XII are shown amounts and values of labor involved in operating the roadside stands and some-

TABLE XII.—*Distribution of labor among men, women and children and values for each stand*

(85 stands supplying complete estimates)

Personnel	Hours of Labor			Value			Stands using		
					For each stand				
	Total	For each stand	Per cent of total	Total	Dollars	Per cent	Number	Average Hours	Average Value
Men	83,399	981	33.0	$35,853	422	41.42	64	1,303	$560
Women	121,006	1,424	47.9	39,573	465	45.72	73	1,658	542
Children	8,624	101	3.4	1,323	16	1.53	7	1,232	189
Hired men	4,466	53	1.8	1,667	20	1.93	4	1,116	417
Hired women	31,232	367	12.4	7,521	88	8.69	20	1,562	376
Hired children	3,826	45	1.5	612	7	.71	3	1,275	204
Total	252,553	2,971	100.0	$86,549	1018	100.00	..	....	....

thing of the personnel. Of the total labor expended in running 85 places of business supplying this information, 84.3 per cent of the hours and 88.7 per cent of the value as estimated were family labor. The average value at each stand of all labor hired was only $115, while the corresponding value for all farms in the state as compiled from the census figures* averaged $143. This type of selling is quite obviously a home talent business, affording employment to people already on the farm and especially to the farm woman; for she was given credit for almost half of all the labor both hired and resident. The total value of all labor per stand amounted to $1018, a little over one third of the gross receipts. Table XIII gives the hourly rates for each stand for

TABLE XIII.—*Distribution of labor among men, women and children and wages per hour*

(85 stands supplying complete estimates)

	Men		Women		Children	
	Per cent of total hours	Average rate per hour for each stand	Per cent of total hours	Average rate per hour for each stand	Per cent of total hours	Average rate per hour for each stand
Home labor	33.0	42.9¢	47.9	33.9¢	3.4	18.1¢
Hired labor	1.8	41.2¢	12.4	25.8¢	1.5	13.7¢

*U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1925.

men, women and children; as actually paid for hired labor, and as estimated for home workers. In every case the average family labor was estimated to be more valuable by the hour than the hired labor. This results not only from the fact that the operator takes more interest in, and responsibility for, the proper running of the stand but also from the tendency to hire some very cheap labor to wash dishes, carry ice, and run errands, rather than to serve as actual salesmen.

An attempt was made to get some information in regard to costs of buildings. Table XIV shows the results of estimates for 41 places having 45 buildings originally constructed for the purpose of roadside selling. The size of these buildings, compiled by simply averaging the dimensions, was about 17 feet wide and 22 feet long. Many had an overhang or open roof in addition. The average cost of construction was $970. Certain selected costs of maintenance are also given. Lights at these stands cost over $24 a season, which again emphasizes the long days of work and short nights of rest for the operators. This expense for lights included illuminated signs and in a very few instances, a little power and heat for fans or grills on the same circuit. Depreciation was estimated at about $20 and taxes at over $18. The estimates on taxes tend to be a little high. There is an inclination to compare taxes following the erection of the new stand with the previous year's amount, and sometimes there has been a revaluation of other property and more frequently an increase in rate. This group of buildings for which selected costs were obtained includes a few rather expensive ones. In contrast, there are attractive farm stands which cost from $100 to $300; and the average for 42 places which had stands, out of the 55 in Table VIII, was $578, with dimensions averaging 14 by 20 feet. Even in this group there were four that cost $2,000 each or more, which seems excessive for the purpose on ordinary farms. The average sales for this group were $3568. The other 13 places had no definite buildings, simply tables and boxes, and their average sales were $1816.

TABLE XIV.—*Average dimensions, value, and selected costs for* 45 *small buildings used at* 41 *places for roadside salesrooms*

Average dimensions in feet		16.9 by 21.9
Average cost of construction		$970
Average for selected costs:		
Lights	$24.29	
Depreciation	19.76	
Taxes	18.36	
Other, including insurance, repairs, heat and miscellaneous	31.94	
Total		$94.35
Average sales at 41 places		$3,991

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Roadside selling in New Hampshire, not unlike that in other states, is in a chaotic condition. It has grown up like Topsy with little conscious attempt toward any definite end. It is new, a few years old, for the most part, and has not settled down to any standard types of market for agricultural products or of stands for merchandising small manufactured goods. It tends to be overdone because of the small initial investment necessary and the lure of possible gains with little risk of appreciable, or properly appraised, losses.

The competition among markets for farm products tends to be less keen because more preliminary planning and expenditure of energy are necessary in order to launch such an undertaking. Nevertheless, half a dozen people, each of whom has a little extra corn, or tomatoes, or cucumbers, or some other product from the family garden, which he puts out on tables for holidays or Sundays when such vegetables happen to be ripe, can add much to the discouragement of a neighbor who is trying conscientiously to run a permanent vegetable market, and to make it worth while for himself and his customers. A little consideration and cooperation here would be much better for all concerned, and allow one or two good markets to handle all the produce. Those who have only small amounts should sell to the larger markets or deliver to them for sale on a commission.

The largest markets in New Hampshire for farm products indicate only about half as much total sales as extremes reported by New England States farther south; and one state west suggests a place with occasional daily sales reaching $10,000.* Perhaps there is a contrast here in so far as these states are more favored in amount of traffic on main roads, and certainly in variety of products adapted to cultivation and in length of season when fruits and vegetables can be gathered from the fields.

It is doubtful, however, if any individual has reached, or approached even, the limit of sales possibilities in New Hampshire for agricultural products under present conditions, and there tends to be a future with yet greater potential sales due to the ever increasing use of better roads and more dependable cars. If we assume that the individual in the state who knows most about raising and preparing vegetables for roadside purchasers is also a good manager and salesman; and if he could be given the best location in the state, then there might easily be developed a volume of sales equal to a combination of any three of the present markets.

But size of business after all is perhaps the least important measure of success for some individuals. Success might better be judged in various cases by alternative opportunities. The farmer who can market his products at a higher price this way than at wholesale, or with

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*Massachusetts State Department of Agriculture, Division of Markets, unpublished data collected in 1926 indicating largest annual sales $30,000; Connecticut Agricultural College, Storrs, Conn., Roadside Marketing in Connecticut, Bulletin 65 suggesting $30,000 as largest annual sales; and Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., Roadside Marketing in Michigan, Special Bulletin, No. 185, p. 5.

less labor than at retail, might be successful even though sales should aggregate only $500 or $1,000. Too many small stands, however, lack uniformity, efficiency and stability, and have insufficient volume of business to warrant proper attention to details in the presentation of products, to good salesmanship, and to desirable advertising. They are less appealing to the trade than a big place with masses of display.

The marketing of farm products is more flexible in some requirements than merchandising, pure and simple. For example, one would hardly expect to build up a special trade for "tonic" or purchased candy and ice cream on a side road off the main highways. With farm products, however, this may be done, for the individuality of the operator here carries weight. His ability to grow things timely and well, and to grade properly, bunch, and package them, and particularly his integrity in regard to prices and quality may gain for him customers with whom competitors have little influence. Several farmers are successfully conducting a roadside market independent of the main traffic routes. For the 103 stands surveyed, considerably over half of the trade was "local" patronage—people who came often enough to be recognized as regular buyers—as shown in Table XV, and many of the farm products markets put little or no dependence on transient trade.

TABLE XV.—*Distribution of trade as estimated between "Local" and "Transient"*

TRADE		STANDS	
Per cent local	Per cent transient	Number	Per cent
0 to 25	100 to 75	22	22
26 to 50	74 to 50	28	28
51 to 75	49 to 25	32	32
76 to 100	24 to 0	18	18
Averages or totals, 55.7	44.3	100*	100

*Three omitted because no estimates possible with their new business.

The term "local" is used to define those persons who come often enough and continuously enough so that they are recognized as regular customers; it usually includes "summer boarders", so called, as well as local residents.

"Transient" refers to those patrons who happen to be at a stand by virtue of their travels when desire and suggestion are sufficiently strong to tempt them to stop to purchase.

Up this dirt road and down a lane goes a lot of traffic for no other reason than to buy farm products of one who always has them well-grown and well-graded and packed.

Location of Stand

Of the factors underlying the successful development of roadside marketing, one of the first to consider is a location. In many cases the ownership of a farm predetermines this within narrow limits. The state affords many examples of unfavorable sites as a result: places half-way up a hill, without adequate parking facilities, hard to enter, etc., and often with no opportunity even for improvement. It is advisable to consider renting a good location rather than suffer such handicaps. The place should be visible from some distance in both directions. There is no better advertisement of a roadside market than the market itself. On the convex side of a slight curve in a level road is ideal, as the curve slows up the traffic as well as aids visibility of the stand. At the top of a hill is not without merit and is next best.

The amount of space needed for parking is of course dependent on the volume of business to be done, but often the presence of a few cars is a suggestion that will be heeded by others. Many proprietors in New Hampshire have remarked this phenomenon. The best size of parking space must accommodate the maximum number of cars that is likely to stop at any one time. At the places surveyed in New Hampshire something over one-third had parking space for ten or more automobiles, and 62 per cent had provided less. These figures are shown in Table XVI. The market in Michigan previously alluded to as a big business, provides parking space for 100 cars. Inadequate parking facilities even for the present small business are often apparent at many of the stands in our state both because of inadequate size and of inaccessibility. It is very important that the parking space be easy to enter and leave. Parking on both sides of the road is desira-

ble. Most people prefer to walk across the road when necessary rather than to cross the traffic stream with a car. The motorists' interests and convenience must be continually consulted at every point.

TABLE XVI.—*Parking space provided by roadside stands*

Room for cars, number	Number of stands	Per cent of stands
Less than 5	32	31.1
5 to 9	32	31.1
10 or more	39	37.8

Advertising

The most obvious method of advertising for transients is by means of signs along the roadway. Signs for several miles as sometimes seen in New Hampshire are of doubtful economy; but one placed a few hundred feet on either side serves a definite purpose. There are many poor signs in New Hampshire which clutter up the roadways, detract from everything that is beautiful, and create resentment in prospective customers as well as in others. To facilitate reading, place the sign more or less at right angles to the road. This enables the motorist to look at it from the front of the car and for a longer time than if placed parallel to his line of travel. Make the words few and the letters large. Four-inch block letters with plenty of contrast in the background can be read perhaps for 200 feet, but easily by most eyes at 100. A sign that is legible at 100 feet, gives the motorist travelling at 35 miles an hour two seconds in which to read all it says, assuming that there is nothing else which deserves his attention more. Probably four-inch letters are the smallest that should be used on the road. Keep the number of words within 5 or 6 if possible. Cards or folders at the stand may give more detail if necessary, and be available for the public to take home to read at leisure. A rather complete list of items for sale may be posted near the place of business and changed daily. To serve this end many use a blackboard. Others use neatly painted wooden bars, each lettered with the name of its particular vegetable or fruit, which may be provided with screw eyes and temporarily hung on hooks to the side of the building or to a special rack.

The number of folders, printed wrappers, etc. which any market finds worth while must depend somewhat on the nature of its customers as well as on the kinds of products sold. Fancy home-made candy wrapped in boxes, naturally carries some distinctive advertising. For large paper bags in which to transport potatoes the desirability of printing is less obvious. Almost any business will serve some strangers, and for these small name-cards are appropriate and inexpensive. If the customer is satisfied he will not resent being reminded of the place again and may use a card to hand some friend who is coming that way.

Good use is often made of the telephone directory or the automobile

Good signs—neat, few words, large letters, placed at an angle to the road.

list in sending circular letters or cards, at opportune times, embodying the information that some special crop is ready, like strawberries, tomatoes, or canning peaches. An occasional advertisement in the local papers may also bring new customers, but has not been used extensively in New Hampshire.

The name of the stand should be distinctive and if possible tell something about the farm or the market that will make it significant and easy to remember as well as pleasing to contemplate. Names like "Hilltop Spa," "Sanderson Farm," "Red Gate Farm," "Honey Gardens" are good examples in our state. In lieu of meeting these requirements and sometimes to avoid duplication, a unique phrase or catchy word may be used, but successful advertising carefully avoids the facetious or undignified. The importance of a name that will fulfill its mission in all respects warrants much care in its selection. Many of our stands are susceptible to improvement in this respect.

Roadside Marketing Associations

Middlesex County, Massachusetts, was a pioneer in forming an association for the protection of producers and consumers against certain unfair practices which developed in roadside marketing. In 1925 an organization called the Middlesex Farmers' Roadside Stand Association was formed with the idea of preventing unscrupulous vendors from buying produce in the city wholesale markets to sell on leased land by the roadside in competition with fresh goods produced and sold by bona fide farmers. A little later this association was made more inclusive by changing its name to the Farmers' Roadside Stand Association of Massachusetts and the ear of corn sign was originated as a distinguishing mark of fair dealing, to the display of which such stands as voluntarily agreed to certain rules and regulations were entitled. Practically simultaneously New Jersey was developing a similar scheme under its State Horticultural Society in conjunction with the State Department of Agriculture. The same ear of corn sign was adopted as in Massachusetts. Since then some other states have adopted similar plans. The official sign has been registered and is only available to members, but other states with groups of stands willing to subscribe to rules and regulations acceptable to the original association may obtain permission to use the same.

As before suggested, New Hampshire has not experienced this menace of unscrupulous reselling of farm products to any appreciable extent and as yet hardly needs the protection of such an association. There might accrue some advertising value from the use of this sign, however, and complying with the necessary rules and regulations would hardly involve any decided change of policy for stands already selling agricultural products in New Hampshire.

There are several different signs to be seen beside the road indicating as many kinds of associations purporting to apply to roadside business, especially in regard to overnight accommodations. These, however, represent commercial organizations which attempt to render some service to the public in designating certain places of business that agree to rules and regulations promulgated by this association. In return the association requires stands displaying the sign to pay a fee which enables them to further extend the service.

The Building

The market building or stand itself should contribute to the ease of selling and displaying the products to be handled. Some places have started in business with a step-like set of shelves, small enough to be portable when empty and presenting an altogether pleasing appearance when supporting a good arrangement of fruits and vegetables. Such a set of shelves may well be used as an adjunct to the larger business for certain purposes. This shelf type of small rack in some states is often made use of by the large markets as an accessory stand to attract the tourist's attention before he reaches the main place of business. In this case it is usually provided with a roof for shade. Beside one market in a nearby state a small circular stand equipped with a water fountain in the center and heaped with different colored root crops proved a most inviting novelty with a suggestion of freshness and coolness.

The permanent building may alleviate much labor by providing overnight protection for goods without too much moving, and a place to keep supplies adjacent to a suitable display. Cellars under stands are practically unknown in New Hampshire, but those in near-by buildings are used instead. Other states have often provided cellar space for temporary preservation of vegetables and fruits at their larger stands.

Above all, the building and equipment must be substantial, well built, and clean and attractive. If the architecture can blend attractively with the rest of the farm buildings, so much the better. The experience of farmers in our state is that if the building is to help the sale of their products, it must not be pretentious, fancy, or savor too much of commercialism rather than of reflected rural individuality. The grounds and other elements of the environment need to harmonize as much as possible toward the end of lending only attractiveness to the marketing activity; and a well-kept set of farm buildings such as may be found in New Hampshire is no mean asset as a background for any sales effort that may be contemplated.

The Display

Striking results to be obtained by a little attention to the art of display are evident at our stands. Large quantities and good variety unconsciously make a strong appeal. Travelling a much frequented road not long since, the author watched sales from a carload of apples which was temporarily displayed in boxes and baskets by a dozen peddlers at the roadside. Some had two bushels, some ten, and some more, but the one likely to sell out first was he who had bought half the carload and spread them out on an accommodating lawn. People passed his stand too fast to stop, slowed up for smaller exhibits on either side, but finally turned around at the next corner to come back and wait in line to purchase from one quart to eight where the supply was largest. There is an appeal in massed displays. Pile up a mountain of pumpkins as big as a house; have both yellow and green and price-tag them; transients on a heavily traveled road will cause them to disappear like mist before the sun. At least this was the testimony of one man, and it is good psychology.

Variety often helps to sell several products to the caller who comes with the intention of buying only one. Variety also tends to attract more customers by meeting their individual requirements, if not, indeed, by tempting them to look for something not yet in mind. Furthermore, consistent, every-day sales for many weeks contribute to a large and less wasteful business, and in this situation variety is potentially a factor.

It seems trite to suggest that everything always must be strictly fresh. Yet it is hard to live up to this ideal absolutely and many persons apparently fail to realize its importance. The very fundamental principle on which roadside marketing rests is that it shall make possible the procuring of better quality produce than can be obtained elsewhere. Every farmer knows the difference between corn and peas that have been picked over night and those that are gathered after the cooking water has been put on to heat. In this difference, not too literally accepted, lies the justification of a system which depends on the consumer to arrange for transportation.

The unusual and individualistic display is always attractive to the tourist. Any peculiarity of the place or product which can be emphasized and incorporated in the advertising is conducive to interest and reminiscence. The coldest spring water, the biggest elm tree, the largest field are talking points as well as the prize Guernsey cow, and local strains of vegetables and fruits. The well arranged exhibit should be made as conspicuous as possible from all directions, and farmers often capitalize the interest and confidence which may be inspired by growing good crops of vegetables and fruits within easy view of the road and access to the stand.

Grading and Packaging

Grading and packaging, especially the latter, are real bugbears to successful experience in marketing for the small producer at a roadside. Grading means first that the products must be free from defects in form and quality. They must be all usable, sound and well matured. Then comes the question of uniformity and sizes. Usually medium sizes are best; sometimes extremes find a ready market. One man sorted his potatoes to a very uniform size and sold them successfully for more than the retail price in a neighboring village. He took the precaution, however, to exhibit beside them some of the usual grade which he offered at less than the retail price. Comparing the two, people gladly paid the premium for the better and flocked to his market as the only place where that grade was available. In general, the roadside customer is looking for something better and is willing to pay for it, but he justly expects full value for his money. And he may not always appreciate the difference unless it be explained or demonstrated. On the other hand, some people are always looking for bargains so that second quality goods or real merit may also be sold at the roadside if properly represented, and without reflection on the market. This is a superior way to justify serving two classes of trade, and the results are much safer than the pernicious practice of charging two prices for the same thing. Eternal vigilance is the price of unquestionable grading. It means the absence of unripe or over-ripe

strawberries in the box, wormholes in the apples, or wilted leaves among the lettuce. Very few markets in New Hampshire show the necessary evidence of care and attention to this important phase of the exhibit which is imperative eventually for outstanding success. To these few comes a class of trade and a loyalty of customers which is conspicuous.

Packages have often added a final touch of attractiveness. Sweet corn, for instance, is less satisfactory when put directly in the back seat of the car, than when delivered in a paper bag. Things in bunches and baskets which can be easily handled and quickly measured not only facilitate quick sales, but, what is more important, assure the motorist of minimum delay. Baskets with handles have proved a temptation to the buyer to make larger purchases because they can so easily be carried.

Prices

Most of the roadside market operators in New Hampshire tend to watch the retail markets in neighboring cities and villages as a guide for prices of their products. These are checked in many cases with Boston quotations to be found in the daily papers and with the Market Bulletin to be obtained free from the State Bureau of Markets at Concord. About half the places selling farm products attempted to sell at retail prices, some 17 per cent slightly above, and 20 per cent decidedly below. The remaining 13 per cent sold between wholesale and retail and simply tried to keep goods moving and to give satisfaction. There were less than one-fifth, apparently, that expected to sell at prices above retail, and with some of these there were extenuating circumstances such, for instance, as rather inaccessible markets and inadequate local production facilities. There is much controversy as to how roadside market prices should compare with retail, but the consensus of opinion seems to be that the man who sells at the roadside must share with the buyer some of the saving in costs of distribution. This does not mean selling at wholesale, by any means. The producer for roadside trade, quite different than the wholesaler, has many exacting requirements to meet, if he does his job well; and for these he must receive remuneration even as any middleman who contributes intermediate service from the field to the table. Many hours are spent in the cool of the early dawn gathering and preparing products for that same day's sales in conformity with the most rigid requirements of freshness and quality; occasional trips have to be made to the field during the busy market hours to supplement an inadequate supply with quality beyond reproach, and thus contribute to the satisfaction of some belated customer; plans and systems must be developed to make all this possible; and all must be done day in and day out, Sundays and holidays alike. Indications are that the consumer appreciates this effort and is willing to pay for it; that his criticism is directed solely in the direction of the proprietor who charges exorbitant and unwarranted prices.

From the consumer's standpoint prices at the roadside should be somewhat lower than those at retail, say five or ten percent, and the farmer should concede his justice in this conception. Experience teaches

that it is only when goods superior to those of the city are offered in the country, that the proprietor may expect his roadside prices to equal or surpass those of the regular market. And, even then, to allay criticism or suspicion some comparison, guarantee, or experience is often needed to make the fact evident. Some farmers, on the other hand, could profit by visiting our city markets and observing the fine appearance and excellent quality of farm products displayed, notwithstanding their relatively long period of separation from their native habitat. It is well to remember, further, that freshness is a much more important element with some products than with others. Good salesmen at the roadside expect to discount apples or potatoes more than lettuce or asparagus, because with the latter crops quality is much more dependent on the element of time which intervenes between harvesting and consuming. Probably 5 or 10 percent below retail prices is as safe a basis from which to start in an attempt to adjust roadside market prices as can be arbitrarily chosen.

Salesmanship

Scarcely does good salesmanship demand more versatility anywhere than at the roadside. All kinds of customers, rich and poor, from the country or the city, North or South, East or West, must sooner or later come in contact with the salesman at a big stand. To handle all these as potential regular customers—the only safe thing to do,—is indeed a man's problem. At such a market one does not find children or old people in charge, but energetic, painstaking individuals having ability coupled with an inexhaustible supply of human interest, persons who can disregard the unpleasant and disagreeable and most quickly appreciate the wholesome and the humorous.

A guarantee of satisfaction inspires confidence and may result in less calls for adjustment than an "As is" policy, and certainly wins more customers. One man guaranteed eggs. A customer started to complain and was handed back her fifty cents. She was too surprised to speak for a minute, and then was consumed with curiosity to understand how it was possible for anyone to guarantee eggs. The explanation was given that no egg over three days old was ever offered at the market. It developed that one egg in a dozen had had a blood spot. Somehow the candler missed it. The fault lay with the market. Nothing was lost by replacing an egg that should never have been sold. The woman declined to allow any adjustment, other than to get 13 eggs in another dozen she purchased that day. This was good salesmanship: it was good advertising.

A telephone is a valuable asset to many markets. Often customers call up to inquire, and can be given suggestions that appeal to them. The use of the telephone to inform regular customers of special products available at opportune times is often requested, and sometimes resorted to otherwise. It is usually found safer to let the customer initiate the practice, as telephones easily degenerate into nuisances.

Salesmanship involves appreciation. The customer likes to feel that his or her patronage is well appraised. Where sales are well made such an atmosphere is evident. Sincere and courteous verbal expressions of thanks are sometimes supplemented with slight tokens, like

flowers for the ladies and children. Neither does good salesmanship overlook the decorative effects of flowers on or about the salesroom in the country. Padding the weights and measures for special friends or customers is sometimes resorted to but is seldom justified. The woman who gets 5 pounds of spinach for a peck and 15 ears of corn for a dozen is likely to be almost as much disappointed sometime when she gets the proper amount, and to cast just as many reflections on the market, as would result had she actually received underweight or short count. There is no law against overweight, except the one of commonsense, but that should be enforced.

Some stands, inadequate in size to afford a full-time attendant, attempt to serve customers by providing a salesman from the nearby farmhouse on short notice. A push-bell at the stand may summon the attendant, or service may depend largely on the watchfulness of the one in charge. This type at best is a makeshift, and can hardly compete with the place having a salesman always and immediately available. Few transients stop when the attendant is not in sight, but such places may fill a need in some few cases not yet supplied with better facilities.

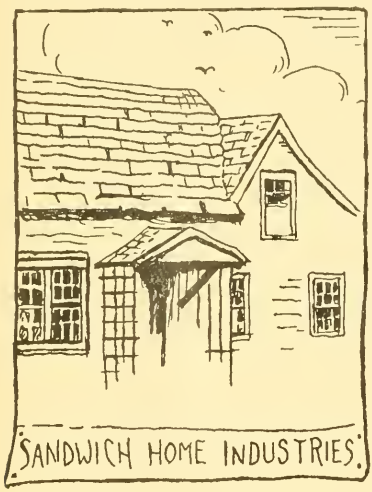
Self service stands are hardly to be found in New Hampshire, but have been tried in other states. They have the advantage of requiring less attention on the part of the proprietor and less waiting on the part of the customer. Some of the disadvantages are evident in flagrant dishonesty, in possible difficulties in making change, and in the lack of appeal which goes with good personal salesmanship.

Finally, in salesmanship is exemplified the summation and unification of all that makes the roadside market business "go". It is the alpha and omega, the conception and anticipation, as well as the fulfillment, of service in creating and supplying the demands of an ever widening potential market among automobile owners. In the newness of the undertaking, leadership is at a disadvantage, but with passing time and a better conception of the problem there will be evolved from rural raw material personnel of adequate capacity. In fact the process is well under way as evidenced at many good stands of the present day in New Hampshire.

INDIVIDUAL DESCRIPTIONS

Some mention is made of a very few individual cases of roadside market development, not necessarily because they are the only ones in their class or even that they represent the largest sellers, but in order to suggest concrete possibilities as evidenced by successful operators.

The first one is a rather unique community enterprise, the Sandwich Home Industries. This was first started in 1926. Sandwich is a rather typical back country town, some twelve miles removed from the disturbing influence of a locomotive whistle. In the days of a self-sufficient agriculture she boasted her full quota of good farmers as well as her craftsmen who plied their trades of making baskets, nails and other iron work, shoes, candles, homespun clothing, quilts, linens, rugs, etc. The results of such handiwork of past generations are sought diligently and constantly by this modern generation, not alone for their beauty but for their utility as well. The lure of such a secluded spot, nestled among the mountains of the Sandwich Range between Squam Lake and Chocorua, has also reached afar and claimed its share of people who, in respite from their usual city routine, experience here a desirable contrast for a summer vacation. A proper appraisal, each of the others problems, virtues, and responsibilities has led to a most friendly spirit of co-operation here until "summer boarders" have tended to become permanent residents and native townspeople to regard them as neighbors. And out of this fine feeling has developed the Sandwich Home Industries. The old crafts have been revived and new recruits trained; the old looms and candle moulds have been rescued from their hiding places and the fires have been rekindled in the forges—all to furnish supplies of finished products; and finally a market "in a house by the side of the road" has been organized as a matter of accommodation to both buyers and sellers. Here several thousand dollars' worth of home-made products are marketed annually in increasing amounts. Only the very best that hand labor can perfect in both old and new is offered, for no effort has been spared to place the project on a sound basis of well developed skill. Not only has the best local talent been exercised, but trained specialists from the large cities and from the State University have been used to perfect and criticize, particularly in meeting the demand for the more modern types of hand work. Some of the major products sold are braided, hooked, woven, husk, and Indian tied rugs; woven bags, towels, runners, sofa pillow tops, etc.; sewed aprons, dresses, pillows, pillow cases, etc.; baskets of all sizes and shapes for which the material is pounded from brown ash; knitted sweaters, socks,



mittens and dolls; and cooked and canned food. Numerous other hand-made articles are shown such as woodwork, ironwork, embroidery, quilting, candle making, etc. All in all it seems an ideally conceived and well managed undertaking having an ecomomic basis in providing additional productive work for an isolated community of deserving people, particularly during the winter months, and the proper setting for a market to place such products before the summer residents and those who travel far in search of unusual gifts during the summer.

Several people are specializing in home-made candies. One woman in particular has built up a large business with an enviable reputation. She makes only the very best and sells it at a fancy price to customers all over New England and even farther away, who in their annual tours from a distance or more frequent jaunts from neighboring cities and villages call at her door to replenish their stock of delicious confections. Great pride in her product and personal attention to every detail in its production have brought recognition of its merit, so that her satisfied customers are indeed her best advertisement. New friends are brought every year to view enthusiastically her spotless kitchen and to feast their eyes on the remarkable exhibit mostly in a variety of chocolate candies coated with the skill of a true artist. Since 1920 in the present location, with only one small sign in her dooryard this lady past middle age has built up a business that might well be the envy of many a younger person. She believes that the only limiting factor in selling annually ten thousand dollars' worth of product lies entirely with her ability to manufacture that amount in the same painstaking way, for she has calls for supplies she cannot possibly fill. Perhaps for this reason she has largely confined her business to roadside sales at the door and only occasionally finds it possible to satisfy an insistent demand by mail at Thanksgiving or Christmas time from summer customers of past experience, whose only guarantee need be that the product was made in this lady's kitchen. And yet, few are the casual visitors at least, who appreciate at all the years of study and experience involved in perfecting this kind of workmanship and in the making of this woman a connoisseur not only in regard to the finished product but also in reference to sources and kinds of raw materials. Such a one, indeed, merits success.

And so another woman in the "homely" job of cooking has made a reputation and built up a good sized retail business. Supplementing the meagre income of her husband she has made an appreciable contribution to the possible standard of living of her family. For some eight years she has been cooking bread, doughnuts, pies, big and little cakes, cookies, etc. While the variety is good, the different products have been considerably standardized so that if one bought cup cakes with chocolate coating last week or last year, the same products are available the day that one wishes them now, and even the chauffeur may be entrusted with the list to get them. Home-made bread in most homes today is a novelty and a pleasing variation for the summer diet. Temporary summer residents who do little cooking would much prefer to buy home-prepared food at a price commensurate with its extra cost even, so long as it is conscientiously and daintily offered. Home-made jams, jellies, and preserves which

provide other than midsummer employment in their manufacture, also find a ready market, and often among other than summer people or tourists. Recognizing and catering to just such a demand this person has built up a business of no mean proportions and made many lasting acquaintances among the real aristocracy who regard her as a friend and co-worker rather than as a servant.

One young man has had faith enough in roadside marketing to devote to it a major part of his almost inexhaustible energy, and a good bit of capital. It is not a side line—it is the aim and objective of his whole family enterprise and of his entire farm organization. Open the year around, his place caters alike to the casual visitor and to the regular customer. Trying to supply at a reasonable price farm products fresh from the garden, the orchard and the hennery, home-cooked meals and special dinners made from these same raw materials, and overnight accommodations second to none, he seems to be meeting a popular demand and to be reaping something of the success which he so fully deserves. As a mere by-product of his business, he provides a refreshment stand with the usual supply of ice cream, tonics, candies and tobaccos. No one deficient in ability to organize physical units of capital, or in the knack of working with people to get practical and effective results, could hope to succeed in as diversified a rural business as this young man has developed. And no one lacking energy, or a strong constitution could possibly endure the long hours of strenuous labor and vigilant supervision, most concentrated in hot weather, without losing at times that subtle courtesy, not only becoming, but absolutely necessary, to the salesman who would make a success of meeting friends and strangers seven days and nights in every week. To few indeed are accorded these characteristics in proper proportions for the accomplishment of a task which may be something of a service to the buyer as well as a means of livelihood to the vendor.

A young man and his wife both left behind well-paying occupations in a big city to enjoy the country and to organize a roadside stand business to their liking as a hobby. They are serving lunches and dinners from one of the most up-to-date kitchens the country affords. And again, true merit is appreciated, for an ever-increasing number of the well-to-do city people is turning into this dooryard to enjoy the fruits of science and industry as applied to the specific problems of furnishing a good meal for a hungry tourist.

SUMMARY

1. In this survey nearly 800 sales places were found on 1000 miles of road.

2. A great variety of articles is sold at the roadside. Many stands simply merchandise products such as soft drinks, ice cream, tobacco products, gasoline, etc. At some place is produced and sold almost every conceivable farm product for human consumption that can be grown in the state.

3. The average sales at 103 locations where considerable detailed information was obtained totaled $2714. The five largest markets averaged $12,721.

4. One of the most important factors in locating a stand is to select a road with heavy traffic. However, by catering to local trade, one may sometimes overcome much of the disadvantage of being confined to a road with little travel.

5. When a farmer sells homegrown vegetables at the door, he is marketing largely his family labor, and the sales represent cash that accrues to him; when he is merely merchandising gasoline or tobacco products, from 70 to 95 per cent of the receipts go to pay for the materials which someone else produced.

6. On 55 farms using roadside marketing methods to dispose of some or all of their products sold, an average of 69 per cent of the family receipts came from such cash sales.

7. Roadside selling is seasonal. Over half the business at 82 places was done in July and August. Four months, from June to September, included over 85 per cent of the annual sales.

8. Work at these places tends to become irksome and monotonous. It involves late hours at night, holidays, and Sundays. Some 30 per cent of the sales are likely to be made on Sunday, 20 per cent on Saturday, and 10 per cent on any other day of the week.

9. About $1000 worth of labor was involved as an average for each stand. Nearly 90 per cent of this was furnished by the family.

10. A house for roadside selling is not necessary, but may be a great convenience. It should be practical, not ostentatious or fancy. An expenditure of over $500 in such construction is seldom warranted.

11. The limit of sales possibilities for an individual roadside market has not been reached in New Hampshire.

12. Over half the business at these roadside places was reported to be done with buyers that come more than once, in fact often enough to be recognized as regular customers.

13. In choosing a site for a stand one should consider the motorist's convenience. The outside of a curve may take advantage of his slowing up, while providing an easy view of the market. The top of a hill is an easy place from which to start. Convenient parking facilities are important.

14. Roadside signs must comprise few words and large letters in order to be comprehended by the passing motorist. Dignity and neatness are indicated.

15. A good name for a stand is an important factor in advertising. It deserves much care in selection.

16. Quantity and variety are important factors in rendering a display of products effective at the stand.

17. The basis of good roadside marketing is freshness of products. Its importance cannot be over-emphasized.

18. Grades and packages are important for farm products. One should study recommended and special types of each for his own local market conditions.

19. Prices are fundamental to success. They involve much study. Fundamentally the salesman at the farm must share with the buyer some of the savings in cost of distribution. For the same quality of goods, a price 5 or 10 per cent below retail is perhaps a fair starting point.

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